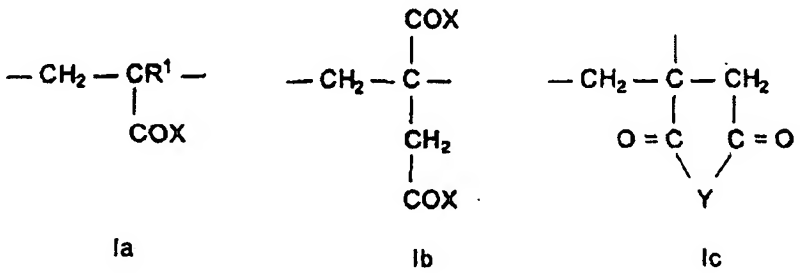
IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-19 (canceled)

20. (previously presented)A copolymer based on unsaturated mono- or dicarboxylic acid derivatives and oxyalkyleneglycol-alkenyl ethers, comprising

a) from 25 to 98.99 mol % of a structural group of at least one of formula Ia, Ib or Ic



Ia Ib Ic

wherein R^1 is hydrogen or an aliphatic hydrocarbon radical having from 1 to 20 C atoms;

X is $-OM_a$, $-O-(C_mH_{2m}O)_n-R^2$, or $-NH-(C_mH_{2m}O)_nR^2$;

M is hydrogen, a mono-or divalent metal cation, an ammonium ion, or an organic amine radical;

a is ½ or 1;

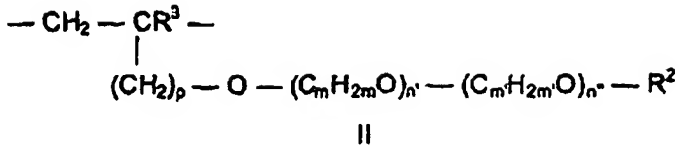
R^2 is hydrogen, an aliphatic hydrocarbon radical having from 1 to 20 C atoms, a cycloaliphatic hydrocarbon radical having from 5 to 8 C atoms, or an optionally substituted aryl radical having from 6 to 14 C atoms

Y is O or NR^2;

m is from 2 to 4; and

n is from 0 to 200;

b) from 1 to 48.9 mol % of the structural group of formula II



II

wherein R^3 is hydrogen or an aliphatic hydrocarbon radical having from 1 to 5 C atoms;

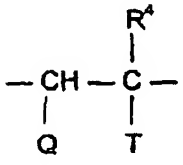
m' is 2 to 4

n' + n" is from 250 to 500

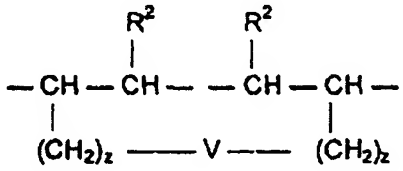
p is from 0 to 3; and

R^2 and m are as defined above;

c) from 0.01 to 6 mol % of a structural group from formula IIIa or IIIb



IIIa



IIIb

wherein Q is -H,-$COOM_a$, or -$COOR^5$;

T is U^1-$(CH(CH_3)-CH_2-O)_x$-$(CH_2-CH_2-O)_y$-R^5;

-$(CH_2)_z$-V-$(CH_2)_z$-CH=CH-R^2;

or -$COOR^5$ when Q is -$COOR^5$ or -$COOM_a$;

U^1 is -CO-NH-, -O-, or CH_2O-;

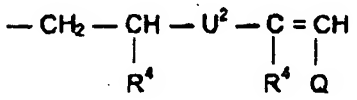
U^2 is -NH-CO-, -O-, or -OCH_2-;

V is -O-CO-C_6H_4-CO-O;

R^4 is H or CH_3

R^5 is an aliphatic hydrocarbon radical having from 3 to 20 C atoms, a cycloaliphatic hydrocarbon having from 5 to 8 C atoms, or an aryl radical having from 6 to 14 C atoms;

$R^6 = R^2$ or



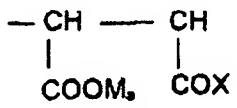
z is from 0 to 4;

x is from 1 to 150; and

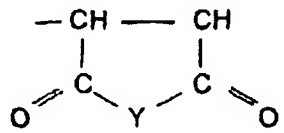
y is from 0 to 15,

and;

d) from 0 to 60 mol of structural groups of formula IVa or IVb



IVa



IVb

wherein a, M, X and Y are as defined above.

21: (previously presented) A copolymer according to claim 20, wherein R^1 is a methyl radical.

22. (previously presented)A copolymer according to claim 20, wherein M is a mono- or divalent metal cation selected from the group consisting of sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium.

23. (previously presented)A copolymer according to claim 20, wherein R^2 is phenyl, the phenyl radical is further substituted by hydroxyl, carboxyl or sulphonic acid groups.

24. (currently amended) A copolymer according to claim 20, wherein n is from 1 to 150.

25. (previously presented)A copolymer according to claim 20, wherein p is 0 and m is 2.

26. (previously presented)A copolymer according to claim 20, comprising from 70 to 94.98 mol% of a structural group of at least one of formula Ia, Ib; or Ic, from 5 to 25 mol% of a structural group of formula II; from 0.02 to 2 mol% of at least one of the structural groups of formula IIIa or IIIb; and from 0 to 24.98 mol% of a structural group of at least one of formula IVa or IVb.

27. (previously presented)A copolymers according to claim 20, further comprising up to 50 mol% based on the total of the structural groups of formulae I, II, III and IV, of a vinyl monomer or (meth)acrylic acid derivative.

28. (previously presented)A copolymers according to claim 27, wherein said monomer is at least one member selected from the group consisting of styrene, α-methlystyrene, vinyl acetate, vinyl propionate, ethylene, propylene, isobuteane, N-vinylpyrrolidone, allylsulphonic acid, methallylsulphonic acid, vinyl sulphonic acid and vinyl phosphonic acid.

29. (previously presented)A copolymer according to claim 28, wherein said monomer is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyalkyl(meth)acrylate, acrylamide, methacrylamide, AMPS, methylmethacylate, methylacrylate, butylacrylate and cyclohexylacrylate.

30. (previously presented) A copolymer according to claim 20 having an average molecular weight of from 1,000 to 100,000 g/mol.

31. (previously presented) A process for the production of a copolymer according to claim 20 comprising polymerizing from 25 to 98.99 mol% of an unsaturated mono- or diocarboxylic acid derivative; from 1 to 48.9 mol% of an oxyalkyleneglycol alkenylether; 0.01 to

6 mol% of a vinyl polyalkyleneglycol compound or ester compound and from 0 to 60 mol% of a dicarboxylic acid derivative using a radical initiator to form the copolymer.

32. (previously presented) A process according to claim 31, comprising polymerizing from 70 to 94.88 mol% of said unsaturated mono- or diocarboxylic acid derivative, from 5 to 25 mol% of said oxyalkyleneglycol alkenylether, from 0.02 to 2 mol% of said vinyl polyalkyleneglycol compound or ester compound and from 0 to 24.98 mol% of said dicarbocyclic acid derivative.

33. (previously presented) A process according to claim 31 wherein up to 50 mol% based on the monomers with the structural groups according to the formulae I, II, III and IV, of a vinyl- or (meth)acrylic acid derivative are also copolymerized.

34. (previously presented) A process according to claim 31, wherein the polymerization is carried out in aqueous solution at a temperature of from 20 to 100 °C.

35. (previously presented) A process according to claim 34 wherein the concentration of said aqueous solution is from 30 to 50% by weight.

36. (previously presented) A process according to claim 31, wherein the polymerization is carried out without solvent using a radical initiator at a temperature of from 20 to 150 °C.

37. (previously presented) An aqueous suspension comprising the copolymer of claim 20 and water.

38. (previously presented)The aqueous suspension of claim 37, wherein said copolymer is present in an amount of from 0.01 to 10% by weight.